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Women's fates in Wartime

TESTIMONIES AND LIFE JOURNEYS OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY WOMEN WHO DISAPPEARED DURING THE TWO WORLD WARS ON THE NORTHERN FRENCH COASTLINE.

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

ULCO UNIVERSITÉ DU LITTORAL CÔTE D'OPALE

Supervised Project – Professional Bachelor's Degree in Tour Guiding and Interpretation

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Introduction

This booklet was created as part of a supervised project for the **Professional Tour Guide degree program in Boulogne-sur-Mer**, in partnership with the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)**.

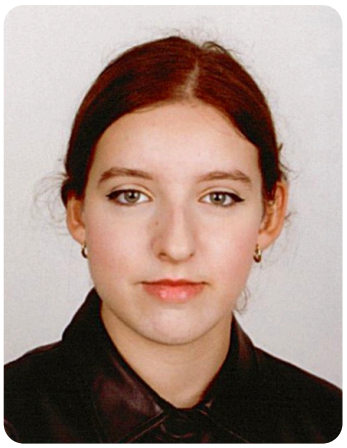
Through this project, we sought to highlight the **stories of women who served during the First and Second World Wars**, Women whose vital roles remain largely unrecognized to this day.
Mostly **nurses or nuns serving on the Opal Coast**, these women dedicated their lives to caring for the wounded under often extremely difficult conditions.
Some paid the ultimate price for their service and now rest in various military cemeteries across the Opal Coast.

The aim of this project is to **recount the stories of around fifty of these women and to honor their memory** through a commemorative tour.
This booklet allows you to discover their **personal journeys**, their **service**, and their **final resting places**.

To enrich the visitor experience, we have also created a **companion audio guide** that covers the information presented in this booklet.
Together, these two resources aim to make this history **accessible** to a wide audience and to encourage a **meaningful, well-documented exploration of our region's commemorative heritage**.

This project represents the first step in a broader undertaking.
We intend to continue this work after our final presentation by producing **two podcasts**, further raising awareness of the stories of these **unsung female heroes** and helping to **preserve their legacy**.

We hope this booklet enables you to discover these **extraordinary lives** and gain a **fresh perspective on the role of women** during the First and Second World Wars.



“This booklet is very close to our hearts, and we hope these stories touch you as deeply as they touched us.”

Phoebe CHATOZLU &
Elisa CHAUB
Students in Professional Tour Guide degree program in Boulogne-sur-Mer

Women

during the First World War

Before the First World War, the majority of women were already working, though often in jobs that lacked recognition and paid less than men's work. Many were employed in **agriculture**, **domestic service**, and the **textile industry**, or worked as **seamstresses**, **laundresses**, and **household staff**. However, when war broke out in 1914, millions of men left for the front. The nations involved in the conflict faced a labor shortage. **Women became indispensable** to **sustaining the economy** and **keeping society running**, stepping in to replace men in many sectors that had previously been almost exclusively male.

In rural areas, women took charge of **farms**, **harvests**, and **livestock**. They had to **feed the population** despite a lack of equipment and the hardships caused by the war. **In cities**, they worked in **factories**, particularly those manufacturing **weapons**, **ammunition**, and **uniforms**. In France, these female workers were often nicknamed "**munitionnettes**." Their work was arduous and dangerous: they handled toxic substances, worked long hours, and faced the risk of accidents. Despite this, they played a **vital role in the war effort**.

Women also took on roles in **transport**, **offices**, and **public services**. Some became **tram drivers**, **postal workers**, **secretaries**, or **administrative staff**. Others served as **nurses**, **volunteers**, or **nursing assistants**, caring for the wounded in military hospitals. They sometimes worked near the front lines under extremely arduous conditions. **Their courage was widely recognized** as they tended to thousands of sick or wounded soldiers.

This period brought about significant **social changes**. By taking on new jobs, women demonstrated their ability to **handle major responsibilities**. They gained greater **autonomy** and **became more aware of their place in society**. Yet, **inequalities persisted**: their wages were often **lower** than men's, even when performing the **same work**. Furthermore, when the war ended in 1918, many were forced to **leave their jobs** to make way for soldiers returning from the front.

Despite this partial step backward, World War I marked a **pivotal moment in the history of women in the workforce**. It demonstrated that women could perform a **wide range of jobs essential** to the country's functioning. Their contributions helped **shift attitudes** and paved the way for **future progress**, particularly regarding the recognition of their rights. Thus, despite its tragedies, the war **accelerated women's emancipation in the workplace**.

Women

during the Second World War

During the Second World War, women once again played a fundamental role in the work and survival of countries at war. As in the previous conflict, many men were mobilized into the armed forces, creating a **significant labor shortage**. Women then had to ensure the functioning of **factories**, **farms, government offices**, and **public services**. However, **their role was even broader** than between 1914 and 1918, as the war affected civilian populations more deeply and transformed all of society.

In factories, women manufactured **weapons**, **airplanes**, **tanks**, **ammunition**, and **military equipment**. They often worked in **grueling conditions**, with long days and little rest. In several countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union, they became **an essential part of the war industry**. The image of the strong and courageous female factory worker developed, symbolized by **propaganda posters** encouraging their participation.

Women also work **in the countryside** to ensure food production. They replace absent men, **cultivate the land**, and tend **the crops** despite shortages and bombings. **In the cities**, they become **secretaries**, **drivers**, **telephone operators**, **nurses**, or **teachers**. Many participate in organizing daily life in a v**ery difficult context** marked by rationing, air raid alerts, and a lack of resources.

During the war, some women also joined **the Resistance**. They carried **messages**, hid **wanted people**, printed underground newspapers, or helped **resistance fighters**. This work was extremely dangerous: if arrested, they risked **imprisonment**, **deportation**, or **death**. Others served directly in the armed forces as **nurses**, **radio operators**, **mechanics**, or **military auxiliaries**.

After 1945, women's place in society evolved even further. Their active participation in the war effort **demonstrated once again their skills in all areas**. In several countries, they obtained new **political and social rights**. In France, for example, women obtained the **right to vote in 1944** and voted for the first time in 1945. Even though professional inequalities persisted, **the Second World War confirmed that women had become indispensable in the modern workplace**.

Thus, the Second World War represents a **major turning point** in the history of women's work. Women demonstrated their **courage**, **adaptability**, and **economic importance**. Thanks to their efforts, **attitudes gradually changed**, paving the way for **greater equality** in the following decades.

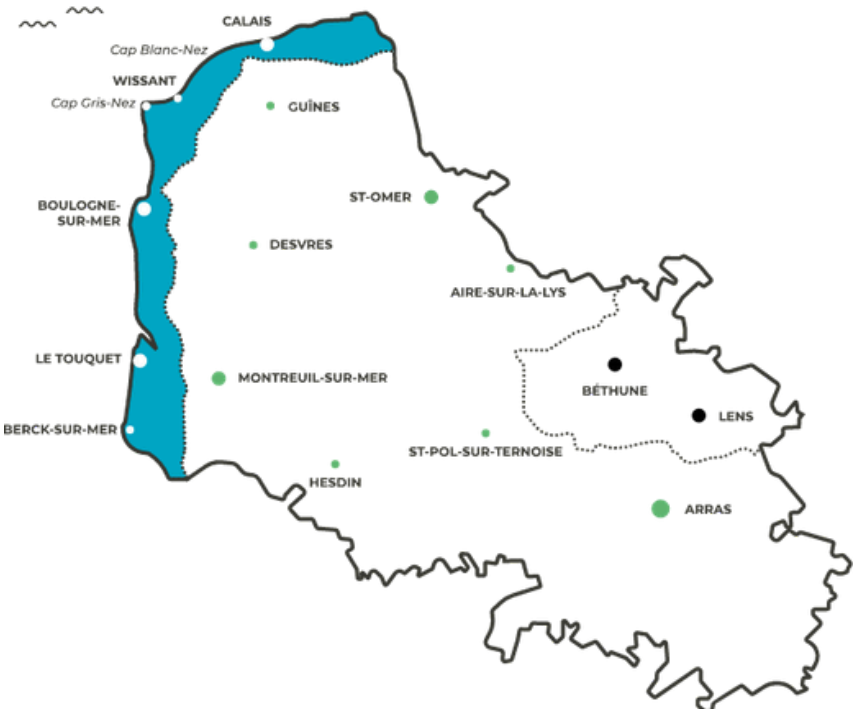
The Opal Coast

during the First and Second World Wars

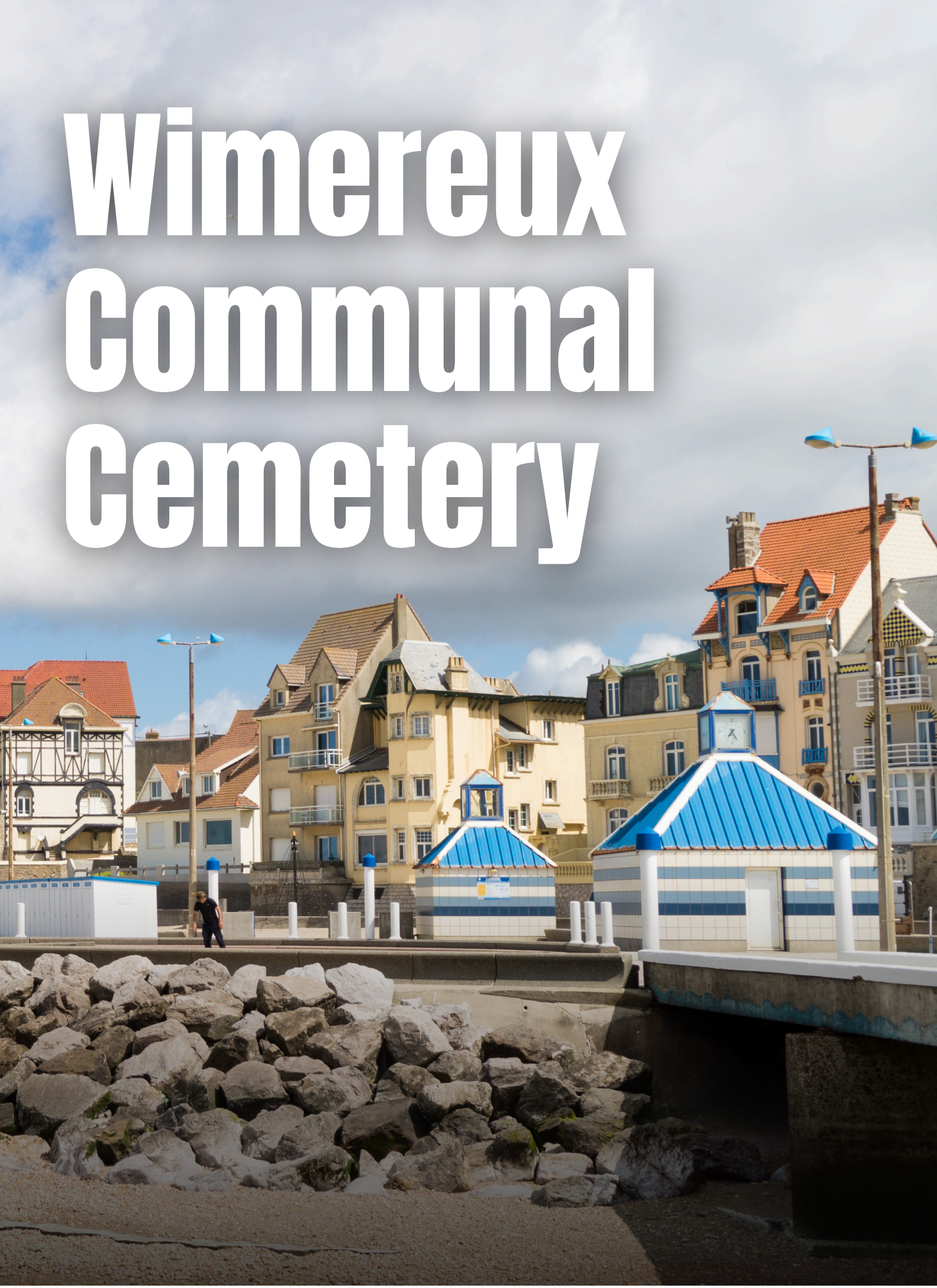
The Opal Coast held great **strategic importance** during the First and Second World Wars due to its position facing **England** and its proximity to the **English Channel**. During the First World War, the **ports of Boulogne-sur-Mer**, **Calais**, and **Dunkirk** served to transport **soldiers**, **weapons**, and **supplies**. **Military hospitals** were also established in the region to **treat wounded soldiers** returning from the front. Its proximity to northern France, where numerous battles were taking place, **made this area crucial for the Allies**.

During the Second World War, the Opal Coast became even more important. After the German invasion of 1940, the region was **occupied by the German army**, which built **bunkers**, **coastal batteries**, and **military bases** as part of the **Atlantic Wall**. The Germans wanted to **control the English Channel** and prepare for a possible invasion of England. The Pas-de-Calais was also the closest area to the English coast, making it **a major strategic location**.

The region then suffered numerous **bombings** and **destruction**. Cities like **Calais**, **Boulogne-sur-Mer**, and **Dunkirk** were heavily damaged. In 1944, the Allies bombed German defenses to prepare for the liberation. Thus, during both World Wars, **the Opal Coast played a crucial military role thanks to its exceptional geographical location**.



Wimereux Communal Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Wimereux**, on the Opal Coast near Boulogne-sur-Mer, this military cemetery lies in an area used as a **rear base by the Allied armies** during the First World War. The town then housed several **military hospitals** where wounded soldiers evacuated from the front were treated.

Between 1914 and 1918, many soldiers were buried there after succumbing to their wounds or illness. The cemetery mainly contains **Commonwealth graves**, reflecting the **intense medical activity in the area**.

The site has a **regular layout**, with rows of white stelae aligned in an open setting, **facing the sea**, reinforcing the atmosphere of calm and contemplation.

Today, this memorial site honors soldiers from different countries and recalls the **essential role of Wimereux as a hospital center during the war**.

Emily Helena Cole (1882-1915)

Born in **Cape Town**, **South Africa**, on *June 11, 1882*, Emily Helena Cole grew up in **Bournemouth, England**, where she continued her studies. After the death of her father, a contractor working for the colonial government, she chose **nursing** and trained at the **Poplar Hospital in London** from *1908* to *1911*. In *1912*, she joined **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service**.

From the outbreak of the First World War, she was sent to **France** with the British Expeditionary Force. Assigned to General Hospital No. 14, located in a large seafront hotel in **Wimereux**, she tirelessly cared for wounded soldiers arriving from the front. Accounts describe a **constant stream of ambulances**, **operations were carried out day and night**, and **makeshift rooms** were set up where patients were placed even in the corridors.

After six months of service in these **trying conditions**, Helena fell seriously ill in *February 1915*. Suffering from cerebrospinal meningitis, she died on *February 21, 1915*, at the age of **32**.
She now rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, alongside thousands of other victims of the conflict. Her name is also inscribed on **several memorials in the United Kingdom**, in tribute to her **commitment** and **sacrifice**.

Myrtle Elizabeth Wilson (1877-1915)

Born in **Melbourne**, **Australia** in *1877*, Myrtle Elizabeth Wilson is distinguished herself early on by her **intelligence** and **sense of duty**. After an initial career in teaching, she chose to become a **nurse** and worked in several hospitals in **Queensland**, alongside her sister.

When the First World War broke out, she wanted to serve her country. Unable to join the Australian military nursing service, she enlisted in 1915 in **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve** in **England**. Myrtle was thus responding to an urgent call to care for wounded soldiers, fully aware of the dangers and **difficult conditions** she would face.

She was quickly sent to **France**, where she cared for wounded soldiers in military hospitals near the front. In this context, nurses played a **vital role**, providing care and comfort to soldiers, often at the risk of their own health.

In *December 1915*, suffering from pneumonia, she was hospitalized at **General Hospital No. 14 in Wimereux**. Her condition deteriorated rapidly and she died on *December 23, 1915*.
She now rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, bearing witness to the **commitment** and **sacrifice** of the nurses who came from the ends of the earth to care for the wounded of the Great War.

Christina Murdoch Wilson (1873-1916)

Born on *August 21, 1873*, in **Cathcart**, near **Glasgow**, **Scotland**, Christina Murdoch Wilson was the eldest daughter of Thomas and Agnes Wilson. While details of her life before the war remain largely unknown, she **trained as a professional nurse** and worked in a hospital setting before the conflict.

When the First World War broke out, she joined **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service**, the elite corps of British military nurses. She served as a "Sister" **(head nurse)** in military hospitals set up in northern France, notably in **Wimereux**, an important British medical center where soldiers evacuated from the front were treated.

Working closely with the wounded, Christina contracted an illness while on duty, likely pneumonia. Her condition deteriorated rapidly, and she died on *March 1, 1916*, at the age of **42**. The Matron-in-Chief's diary mentions that she was still reported to be "**in a dangerous condition**" the day before her death.

She was buried on *March 2, 1916*, in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, where more than 3,000 Commonwealth soldiers and medical personnel are laid to rest. Her grave, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, commemorates the **commitment** and **dedication** of these women who left civilian life to care for war victims, **often at the cost of their own lives**.

Rubie Pickard (1856-1915)

Born around *1856* in **Stepney**, **London**, Sarah Rubie Hill, known as Rubie Pickard after her marriage, married Samuel Pickard in *1880* in Lancashire. The couple led a family life in England, where Samuel worked in the paper industry. Together, they raised several children in a setting typical of Victorian England.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Rubie accompanied her husband to **France**. He was serving as a **captain** and **head of supplies** for the British Red Cross within the British Expeditionary Force. Rubie also joined the **humanitarian effort**.

Although she is sometimes mentioned as a member of a **VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment)**, the archives indicate that she was dependent on the **British Red Cross**.

Her involvement was not in combat, but in providing **logistical** and **medical support** to British forces. She died in **France** in *1915*, at approximately **67 years** of age, from an illness, likely stomach cancer. She is **one of the oldest** women commemorated by the **CWGC** for the First World War.

Rubie Pickard rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**. Her presence among the military graves is a reminder that the war also mobilized **civilian women**, whose **humanitarian work** was **essential to the functioning of the relief and health services**.

Barbara Esmée St John (1885-1916)

Enlisting during the First World War in the **112th Sussex Voluntary Aid Detachment**, Barbara served as a **volunteer nurse** for the **British Red Cross**. Her unit was sent to **France** to support military hospitals near the front lines, where wounded soldiers were arriving in droves.

At the heart of the fighting, she participates in the **care and support of the sick and wounded** under particularly trying conditions. Like many volunteers, she exposes herself to **risks** not only related to the war, but also to the **diseases** circulating in hospitals and military camps.

In October 1916, while still serving in France, Barbara fell seriously ill. She succumbed at the age of **31** to **Landry's paralysis**, now known as **Guillain-Barré syndrome**, a neurological condition often triggered by an infection and which can lead to progressive and fatal paralysis.

She rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, among the many soldiers and medical personnel of the Commonwealth. Her grave is a reminder of the **essential role** played by **volunteer nurses**, whose commitment to serving others often put their own lives at risk.

Amorel Kitty Trevelyan (1897-1917)

Born on *October 17, 1897* in **Dublin**, **Ireland**, Armorel Katherine Trevelyan was the daughter of Walter Raleigh Trevelyan and Georgina Alice Featherstone. After her parents' divorce, she grew up in **Devon**, in **Meavy**, near **Dartmoor**, where her mother settled with her new husband.

When the First World War broke out, Armorel **was too young to enlist**. Nevertheless, **despite her youth**, she managed to join a **Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD)**. Sent to **France** in *1916*, she worked for thirteen months with the **Army Service Corps**, carrying out essential tasks of **supplying** and **supporting** soldiers near the front lines.

At the end of her service, she contracted **measles** and then **pneumonia**. These illnesses were common in military camps, where sanitary conditions were often poor. Weakened by the disease, she died in France on *February 27, 1917*, far from her family, at the **age of 19**.

Katherine Trevelyan Armorel now rests in the **Communal cemetery of Wimereux**. Her name, initially absent from the war memorial of her village, was added a century later, recalling the long-unrecognized role of **young women volunteers** in the war effort.

Isabella Lucy May Duncan (1872-1917)

Born on *July 3, 1872*, in **Heaton Norris**, near **Stockport**, **England**, Isabella Lucy May Duncan was the daughter of John and Caroline Duncan. After working as a **schoolteacher**, she chose to dedicate herself to **nursing**. Trained at **Stockport General Hospital** between *1900* and *1903*, she continued her career in **London** and then **Brighton**, gaining extensive hospital experience before the war.

In *March 1915*, she joined **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve** and was initially sent to **Malta**, an important center for the care of wounded soldiers. After a year of service, she was assigned to **France**.

near **Boulogne-sur-Mer**, at the **13th stationary hospital**. In charge of the surgical rooms, she also provides **night shifts** and participates in the **evacuation of the wounded** by hospital train.

While serving on the Western Front, Isabella contracted **pleuropneumonia**, a serious lung infection. She died on *March 1, 1917*, at the **age of 45**, while still on active duty.

Isabella Lucy May Duncan rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, among many Commonwealth soldiers and medical personnel. Her grave testifies to the **commitment** and **dedication** of these nurses who gave their lives caring for the victims of war.

Nita Madeline King (1887-1917)

Born in *1887* in **Fareham**, **Hampshire**, Nita Madeline King was the daughter of George Hall King and Lydia King, who lived in **Cosham**, near **Portsmouth**. After her father's death in *1902*, she grew up with her mother, who was still alive when she enlisted during the First World War.

In *September 1916*, Nita joined the **VAD**, a **volunteer organization** providing essential support to British military medical services. Assigned to the **Wimereux-Boulogne hospital** base in **France**, she worked as a **cook** in a large tented hospital complex. Her role, though discreet, directly contributed to the daily operation of the healthcare facilities and welcoming the wounded from the front.

On *May 25, 1917*, while still on active duty, Nita died at the **age of 29**. Although official records only mention a death "on duty," other sources indicate that she succumbed to **cerebrospinal meningitis** contracted there.

Nita Madeline King rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**, among many Commonwealth soldiers and medical personnel. Her grave is a reminder of the **importance of the work of female volunteers**, whose commitment was **essential** to the functioning of wartime hospitals.

Margaret Ellen Evans (1877-1917)

Born in **Stamford**, **Lincolnshire**, in the *summer of 1877*, Margaret Ellen Evans grew up in a well-to-do family. Her father, a lawyer and later a manager of a local bank, ensured she received a comfortable education. After her parents' death at the *beginning of the 20th century*, Margaret enjoyed a degree of financial independence.

In 1911, she joined the **Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD)**. When the First World War broke out, she actively served in the **British Red Cross nursing service**. She first worked at the **Stamford infirmary**, then at the **4th Northern General Hospital in Lincoln**. In *July 1916*, she was sent to **France** and assigned to the **83rd Hospital general** near **Boulogne-sur-Mer**, where soldiers evacuated from the front are treated.

After nearly a year of **service across the Channel**, Margaret contracted an infectious disease. Too weak to continue her work, she was **admitted to Stationary Hospital No. 14 in Wimereux**, where she died on *July 22, 1917*, at the **age of 39**.

Margaret Ellen Evans rests in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**. Her **voluntary commitment**, when no material constraint compelled her to do so, testifies to the **sense of duty** and **dedication** of many women who devoted their lives to the care of the wounded during the Great War.

Jessie Olive Hockey (1885-1917)

Born on *June 10, 1885* in the **Cape** Province of **South Africa**, Jessie Olive Hockey grew up in a large family of nine children. Trained as a nurse, she joined the **South African Military Nursing Service** and chose to serve overseas during the First World War.

In December 1916, she was part of a **contingent of 25 South African nurses** sent to **Europe** and attached to **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve**. After an initial posting in **England**, she was sent to France, where she served notably at **General Hospital No. 2 in Le Havre**. There, she cared for wounded and sick soldiers evacuated from the front, under particularly trying conditions.

In *May 1917*, Jessie contracted **cerebrospinal meningitis**, a serious and often fatal infection at the time. Despite a temporary improvement, her condition worsened during the summer. She died on *August 14, 1917*, likely from the illness contracted while on duty.

Jessie Olive Hockey is buried in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**. Her grave commemorates the **commitment of the nurses who came from South Africa** to support the **Allied medical effort**, and the **sacrifice of these women** who risked their lives to care for others.

Alice Hilda Lancaster (1883-1918)

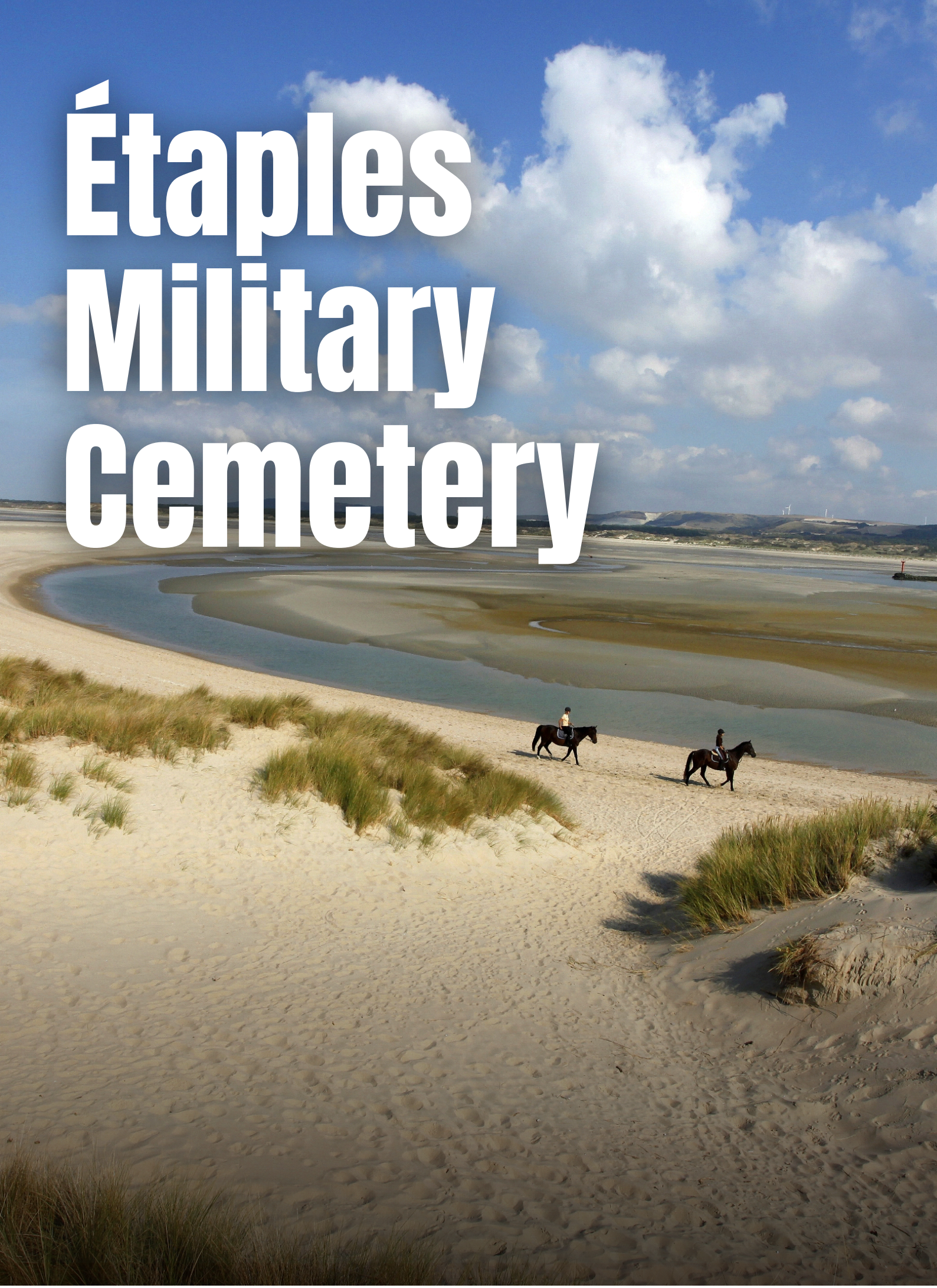
Born in 1883 in **Barnsley**, **Yorkshire**, Alice Hilda Lancaster, registered at birth as Hilda Alice, was the youngest daughter of a wealthy family. Her father ran a successful auction house, and the family lived on a large estate in Monk Bretton. Following the early death of her mother, Alice grew up with her father and siblings.

At the outbreak of the First World War, she joined the **nursing service**. She initially worked in a **military hospital** in **Barnsley**, then joined **No. 5 London General Hospital** before serving at **St. Thomas' Hospital** in **London**. In *May 1918*, she volunteered to go to **France** and was assigned to **No. 8 Stationary Hospital in Wimereux**, important hospital center of the **British Expeditionary Force**.

On *June 3, 1918*, a week after her arrival, Alice accidentally drowned at sea in Wimereux, swept away by a current while swimming after her shift. She was **35 years old**.

Alice Hilda Lancaster is buried in the **Wimereux Communal cemetery**. Her name also appears **on several war memorials in her native Yorkshire**, a reminder that the sacrifice of war was not confined to the battlefields.

Étaples Military Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Étaples**, near Le Touquet, this cemetery is the **largest Commonwealth military cemetery in France**. During the First World War, the town became a huge **logistics** and **medical center**, housing numerous **military hospitals**.

Between 1915 and 1918, tens of thousands of soldiers passed through the area to be treated after being evacuated from the front. Many died there from their **wounds** or **diseases** and were buried on site.

The cemetery itself is meticulously laid out, with rows of headstones aligned in a verdant setting. Today, it stands as a **major memorial to the Great War**, illustrating the scale of the human losses and the strategic **importance of the Étaples area**.

Jeanie Barclay Smith (1874-1916)

Born on *February 22, 1874* in **Aberlour**, **Scotland**, Jeanie McPherson Barclay Smith, often called Jeanie, although her given name was Jane, grew up in a large family. The daughter of a pharmacist, she was raised in a stable environment and received **nursing training** at the **Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh**, where she began her career at the beginning of the 20th century.

In *1907*, she joined the **British military nursing service** as a **staff nurse**. She worked in several hospitals in **England** before temporarily leaving her post and then joining the **reserves**. On the eve of the conflict, she already possessed considerable **medical and hospital experience**.

At the outbreak of the First World War, she was mobilized and sent to **France**. Assigned to **Étaples**, one of the largest **British hospitals**, she cared for a large number of wounded soldiers from the front. During her service, she was transferred to various hospitals and rose through the ranks to become an **Assistant Matron**, then a **Matron**. Her dedication and professionalism were recognized with the award of the prestigious **Royal Red Cross** (**1st Class**).

Jeanie Barclay Smith died on *April 28, 1916*, while on duty in **Le Touquet**, from an **illness** contracted in the line of duty. She was **42 years old**. Buried in the **military cemetery of Étaples**, her grave serves as a reminder of the **essential role** and **sacrifice of women involved** in caring for soldiers during the war.

Eliza Margaret Nisbet (1864-1916)

Born on *November 23, 1864*, in **Glasgow**, **Scotland**, Eliza Margaret Nisbet was the daughter of David Nisbet and Jane Stevenson. She grew up in a large family and spent most of her life in her hometown, where she remained single. Sources provide little information about her education or profession, but suggest a stable lifestyle within the local middle class.

In *June 1916*, at the **age of 51**, she left **Glasgow** for **France** with her sister Amy Jane. Both volunteered with the **Scottish Churches Huts**, an organization linked to the **Church of Scotland**, which provided **moral support**, **rest** and **material assistance** to soldiers.

Assigned to the **Étaples** region, an important military center during the First World War, she participated in this humanitarian effort to support the troops. However, only a few weeks after her arrival, she fell ill, in a context marked by the **spread of epidemics** among the soldiers and staff.

Eliza Margaret Nisbet died on *August 16, 1916*, at the military hospital in Étaples. She was buried in the **town's military cemetery**. Her service, though brief, illustrates the **essential role of civilian women volunteers**, whose dedication contributed to supporting soldiers far from the front lines.

Alice Violet Hallam (1871-1916)

Born in *1871* in **Hampstead**, **England**, Alice Violet Hallam was the eldest of four children. The daughter of a tea merchant, she grew up in comfortable surroundings with her siblings. She spent most of her life in **London**, where she lived with her family until the years leading up to the war.

During the First World War, she volunteered as a nurse with the **Voluntary Aid Detachment** (**VAD**). Stationed in **France**, she served in a **British military hospital**, providing assistance to numerous wounded soldiers. Her commitment led her to undertake several tours of **duty at the front** between *1915* and *1916*.

In contact with the wounded and in difficult sanitary conditions, she contracted an **illness** while on duty. Despite the care she received, her condition deteriorated rapidly, illustrating the **constant risks** to which medical personnel were exposed.

Alice Violet Hallam died on *December 18, 1916*, in **Étaples**, at the **age of 45**. She is buried in the **town's military cemetery**. Her story testifies to the **dedication of volunteer nurses**, whose commitment was essential in caring for the victims of the conflict.

Katherine MacDonald (1884-1918)

Born on *January 18, 1884*, in **Brantford**, **Ontario**, **Canada**, Katherine Maud Mary MacDonald grew up in a Canadian family of Irish and Scottish descent. The daughter of a carpenter, she was raised in a Christian environment and attended school in **Brantford** before training as a **nurse** at **Victoria Hospital** in **London**, **Ontario**, where she graduated in *1915*.

During the First World War, she joined the **Canadian Army Medical Corps** in *1917*. After an initial posting in **England**, she was sent to **France** in *1918* and joined **Canadian General Hospital No. 1** in **Étaples**.

On the night of *May 19, 1918*, the **hospital at Étaples** was heavily **bombed** by German aircraft. During this attack, she was mortally wounded by **shrapnel**, along with other Canadian nurses. She died shortly afterward, at the **age of 34**, a direct victim of **aerial combat**.

She is buried in the **military cemetery of Étaples**. Her sacrifice illustrates the **role** and **courage** of **Canadian military nurses**, engaged on the front line of care, also exposed to the **dangers of war** and sometimes direct victims of **enemy attacks**.

Gladys Wake (1883-1918)

Born on *December 13, 1883*, in **Esquimalt**, **British Columbia**, **Canada**, Gladys Maude Mary Wake grew up in a family with strong ties to the British naval tradition. The daughter of a shipyard worker, she was raised in an environment characterized by **service** and **duty**. She trained as a nurse at the **Royal Jubilee Hospital** in **Victoria**, **graduating** in *1912*.

During the First World War, in *1916* she enlisted in the **Canadian military nursing service**. After serving in several hospitals in **Canada** and **England**, she was sent to various **theaters of operation**, notably **Greece**, before being assigned to the hospital in **France**, **Canadian general no. 1 of Étaples** in *May 1918*.

On the night of *May 19, 1918*, the **hospital complex in Étaples** was heavily **bombed** by the German air force. The nurses' quarters were hit, and Gladys Wake was seriously injured, suffering from burns and severe fractures. Despite the violence of the attack and the surrounding chaos, accounts highlight the **courage** and **composure** of the medical staff.

She died of her wounds on *May 21, 1918*, at the **age of 34**, and was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story embodies the **dedication** of Canadian military nurses, who were deployed close to the fighting and sometimes became **direct victims of enemy attacks** while caring for the wounded.

Margaret Ann Lowe (1888-1918)

Born on *January 26, 1888*, in **Morayshire**, **Scotland**, Margaret Ann Lowe grew up in a family with close ties to Canada before settling in **Binscarth**, **Manitoba**, on the plains during her childhood. From a family of Scottish immigrants, she was raised in the **Presbyterian tradition** and chose early on to pursue a career in **nursing**. She trained at **Winnipeg General Hospital**, where she graduated in *1916*.

During the First World War, in *1917* she enlisted in the **Canadian military nursing service**. After an initial posting in **England**, she was sent to **France** and joined **Canadian General Hospital No. 1 in Étaples**, an important rear-area medical center where wounded soldiers from the Western Front were transferred. There, she served as a **military nurse** with the rank of **Nursing Sister**.

On the night of *May 19, 1918*, the **hospital complex in Étaples** was heavily **bombed** by the German air force. The tents and medical buildings were hit while in operation, causing numerous casualties among staff and patients. She was seriously wounded during the attack and **evacuated to another military hospital** for treatment.

She died of her wounds on *May 28, 1918*, at the **age of 30**, and was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story testifies to the **courage** and **commitment** of Canadian nurses, who served on the front lines and **sometimes paid with their lives** for their devotion to wounded soldiers.

Bertha Gavin Stevenson (1896-1918)

Born on *September 3, 1896*, in **York**, **England**, Bertha Gavin "Betty" Stevenson grew up in a middle-class family, surrounded by her parents and younger brother. She received a thorough education, first at home and then at boarding school, before pursuing **musical studies** in **Brussels**. From a very young age, she distinguished herself by her **quick wit**, **generosity,** and a **warm personality** that left a lasting impression on all who knew her.

At the outbreak of the First World War, she became involved very early on in **humanitarian work**, particularly with Belgian refugees in England. She later joined the **YMCA** (**Young Men's Christian Association**) and worked in **France** from *1916* in canteens for soldiers, where she provided **support**, **food** and **comfort** to military personnel and civilians affected by the war.

In *1917*, she returned to **France** as a **driver** for the YMCA and was assigned to **Étaples**, an important military and logistics center behind the front lines. There she transported soldiers, wounded men and families, while also participating in the operation of the reception centers.

Betty Stevenson was killed on *May 30, 1918*, at the **age of 21**, during an **aerial bombardment** while she was on a road near Étaples. She was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery** with full military honors. Her story embodies the commitment of young women **volunteers** who came to support soldiers and civilians close to the front lines.

Annie Watson Bain (1888-1918)

Born in *1888* in **Harrismith**, **South Africa**, Annie Watson Bain grew up in a family of **Scottish** descent, immersed in both British traditions and South African colonial life. The daughter of a Scottish father who had settled in the Free State, she received an education whose details remain largely unknown. Early on, however, she chose to pursue a career in **nursing** and underwent training that led her to work in the **medical field**.

During the First World War, she joined the **Order of Saint John** and was sent to **France** to serve in a British military hospital. Assigned to **Étaples**, an important rear-front medical center, she worked as a **junior nurse** under the authority of senior medical staff, in a **strict** and **highly hierarchical** environment.

Known for her **sense of duty** and **commitment to discipline**, Annie Bain participated in the daily operation of hospital services under demanding conditions, in constant contact with wounded soldiers from the front.

On *June 1, 1918*, while on night duty in a hospital ward in Étaples, she was killed during a heavy German **air raid**. Approximately **30 years old**, she was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story testifies to the **dedication of the nurses** of the Order of Saint John, who served to the **ultimate sacrifice** in wartime hospitals.

Blanche Amelia Page (1888-1918)

Born around *1888* in **Southampton**, **England**, Blanche Amelia Page grew up in a large family, the eldest of six children. From a modest background, she moved with her parents to **Eastleigh**, **Hampshire**, where she led a life marked by **work** and **family responsibilities**. By *1911*, she was already working as a **telephone operator**.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps** (**formerly WAAC**), a women's **support** organization for the British Army. She was sent to **France** and assigned to the **Royal Engineers' signals service**, where she participated to the functioning of **military communications**.

Although the precise details of her missions remain poorly documented, her role falls within the scope of tasks assigned to women in the auxiliary corps, ranging from **administrative work** to **logistical support for military units**. She was subsequently taken to a **convalescent home**, suggesting that she was weakened by illness.

Blanche Amelia Page died of **pneumonia** on *December 7, 1918*, in **Étaples**, shortly after the end of the war, while still serving. She is buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story is a reminder of the commitment of the women of the **QMAAC**, mobilized alongside the British Army and sometimes victims of the harsh conditions of wartime service.

Jessie Emily Wakefield (1879-1919)

Born on *January 27, 1879*, in **Maidstone**, **Kent**, **England**, Jessie Emily Wakefield grew up in a large family of nine children. The daughter of a grain and coal merchant, she spent her childhood in her hometown before working as a **governess** in her youth. She then chose to pursue a career in nursing and trained at the **Norfolk & Norwich Hospital**, where she studied between 1908 and 1911.

During the First World War, she joined the **Territorial Force Nursing Service** in *1914*. She was assigned to **Addenbrooke's Military Hospital** in **Cambridge**, where she was described as **conscientious**, **methodical**, and **attentive** to the patients.

She quickly expressed a desire to serve in **France** and in *1917* received the **distinction of Associate of the Royal Red Cross** for her **commitment**.

In 1918, she was sent to **France** and joined a military hospital in **Étaples**, an important medical center behind the front lines. Despite several bouts of illness, including **bronchitis**, she resumed her duties caring for the wounded, in a context marked by epidemics and **difficult working conditions**. Her health, however, gradually deteriorated.

Jessie Emily Wakefield died on *February 7, 1919*, at the **Étaples military hospital** from septicemia complicated by meningitis. She was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**.

Marguerite McArthur (1892-1919)

Born on *March 25, 1892*, in **Kensington, London**, Margaret McArthur grew up in a cultured and close-knit family. She distinguished herself early on through her **intellectual abilities**, her **love of languages**, and her **excellent interpersonal skills**. She received an outstanding academic education, achieving remarkable results in history and languages, after studying in **England** and **Germany**.

At the outbreak of the First World War, she returned to **England** in *1914* and immediately joined the war effort. Thanks to her **language skills**, she initially worked at the **War Office Translation Service Bureau** before joining the **YMCA** (**Young Men's Christian Association**), an organization dedicated to providing aid and comfort to soldiers. She also used her talents to educate troops in **France** from *1918* onwards.

Stationed in **Étaples**, an important military and logistics center behind the front lines, she participated in **educational** and **cultural activities** for soldiers, offering them **intellectual** and **moral support**. She is remembered for her **profoundly inspiring presence** among the men she led.

Marguerite McArthur died on *February 13, 1919*, at the **military hospital in Étaples**, from influenza which developed into **pneumonia**. **Aged 26**, she received a military funeral in **recognition** of her service to the British Army.

Doris Mary Luker (1898-1919)

Born in *1898* in **Woking**, **England**, Doris Mary Luker grew up in a working-class family in Surrey. The daughter of a railway worker and later a gardener, she was raised with her siblings in a simple but stable environment. Before the war, she lived with her family in **Horsell**, near **Woking**, and her youth was marked by rural and domestic life.

During the First World War, she lost her older brother, killed in action in *1916*, and then enlisted herself in *1917* in the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**. After an initial experience in a women's army support service, she was sent to **France** and assigned to **Étaples**.

She worked there for about a year as a **cook** in an officers' mess, contributing to the **daily operation** of the soldiers' rest and accommodation services. In this context, marked by **overcrowding** and **difficult sanitary conditions**, she was exposed to the diseases affecting many members of staff.

Doris Mary Luker died of **pneumonia** on *February 13, 1919*, at the **Étaples military hospital**, at the **age of 21**. She was buried in the **town's military cemetery**. Her story testifies to the commitment of the young women of the **QMAAC**, who were mobilized in **essential logistical support roles** for the armed forces during the war.

Mary Maria Matthews (1890/91-1919)

Born around *1890–1891* in **England**, Mary Maria Matthews grew up in **Norfolk**, in a family settled in **Buxton**. The daughter of Walter and Ellen Matthews, little is documented about her early years, but sources indicate that she grew up in a stable family environment.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps** (**QMAAC**), an all-female organization created to support the British Army by performing **essential non-combat tasks**. She thus contributed to the war effort by integrating into the **logistical** and **administrative services** vital to the army's operation.

Assigned to **France**, she served in the **Étaples** region, an important military and hospital center behind the front lines. Like many women from the QMAAC, she contributed to the **daily support** of the troops through **service** and **organizational missions** in camps and military installations.

Mary Maria Matthews died on *February 17, 1919*, at the **age of 28**. She is buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story illustrates the commitment of the women of the QMAAC, whose **discreet** but **essential work** greatly contributed to the British war effort.

Marjorie Croysdale (1893-1919)

Born on *January 16, 1893* in **Sunbury-on-Thames**, **England**, Marjorie Croysdale grew up in a wealthy and influential family. The daughter of a magistrate and former High Sheriff of Surrey, she lived in a privileged environment, surrounded by her brothers and sisters in a large family home where she received a **refined education**.

During the First World War, her brother's involvement on the Western Front profoundly influenced her path. In *1915*, she decided in turn to **serve her country** and began **training as a nurse**, before joining **Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service** as a **military probationary**.

She was sent to **France** in *1916* and assigned to **General Hospital No. 24** in **Étaples**, an important medical center behind the front lines.

She served as a military nurse caring for wounded soldiers at the front, under particularly difficult conditions marked by the **heavy workload** and the **risks associated with aerial bombardments**. Despite these dangers, she continued her commitment with **unwavering dedication**, participating in the care of numerous soldiers over several years of service.

Marjorie Croysdale died on *March 2, 1919* in **Le Touquet**, from influenza which developed into **pneumonia**, in the context of the *1918–1919* pandemic. She was buried in the **military cemetery of Étaples**.

Edith H. Routledge (1890-1919)

Born in *1890* in **Rock Ferry**, **Cheshire**, **England**, Edith Honoria Routledge grew up in a British family, of which she was the eldest. Before the war, she worked in the **postal administration** in **Liverpool**, probably in a department related to **telegraph communications** or **mail sorting**, thus already contributing to the **functioning of essential public services**.

During the First World War, she joined the **Women's Army Auxiliary Corps** (**WAAC**), an organization created to allow women to support the British Army in **non-combat roles**. There, she held the position of **Assistant Forewoman**, a **supervisory role** where she **guides** and **organizes** the work of other women in administrative and logistical services.

Recognized for her **effectiveness**, she was mentioned in **official military reports**, a **distinction** reserved for **outstanding service**. She thus contributed to the smooth functioning of the army behind the front lines, in a context where **organization** and **communications** were essential to the war effort.

Edith H. Routledge died on *March 5, 1919*, and was buried in the **Étaples military cemetery**. Her story testifies to the commitment of the **women of the WAAC**, whose **administrative** and **logistical work** played an indispensable role in supporting the British armed forces during and after the war.

Dorothea Crewdson (1886-1919)

Born in *July 1886* in **Clifton**, **England**, Dorothea Mary Lynette Crewdson grew up in a wealthy and cultured family. The daughter of a lawyer and an artist, she spent her childhood in **Nottingham** in a privileged environment, surrounded by her siblings. She received a private education and developed early **language skills** that would prove useful to her later in life.

During the First World War, she enlisted in *1914* as a **volunteer nurse** with the **British Red Cross** (**VAD**). After an initial period of service in England, she was sent to **France** in *1915* and assigned to **Stationary Hospital No. 16** in **Le Tréport**, where she treated wounded and sick soldiers.

She was subsequently transferred to several military hospitals, notably in **Wimereux** and then in **Étaples**, an important rear-echelon medical center. In *May 1918*, during a German **air raid** on the hospital complex, she was wounded but nevertheless continued to care for patients and assist the medical teams. For her **courage** and **dedication**, she received the **Military Medal** and the **Royal Red Cross**.

Dorothea Crewdson died on *March 12, 1919*, from **peritonitis**, at the **age of 32**. She is buried in the **military cemetery at Étaples**. Her story illustrates the **exceptional commitment** of **volunteer nurses**, who worked closely with the wounded and sometimes at the risk of their own lives.

Matilda Ethel Green (1886-1918)

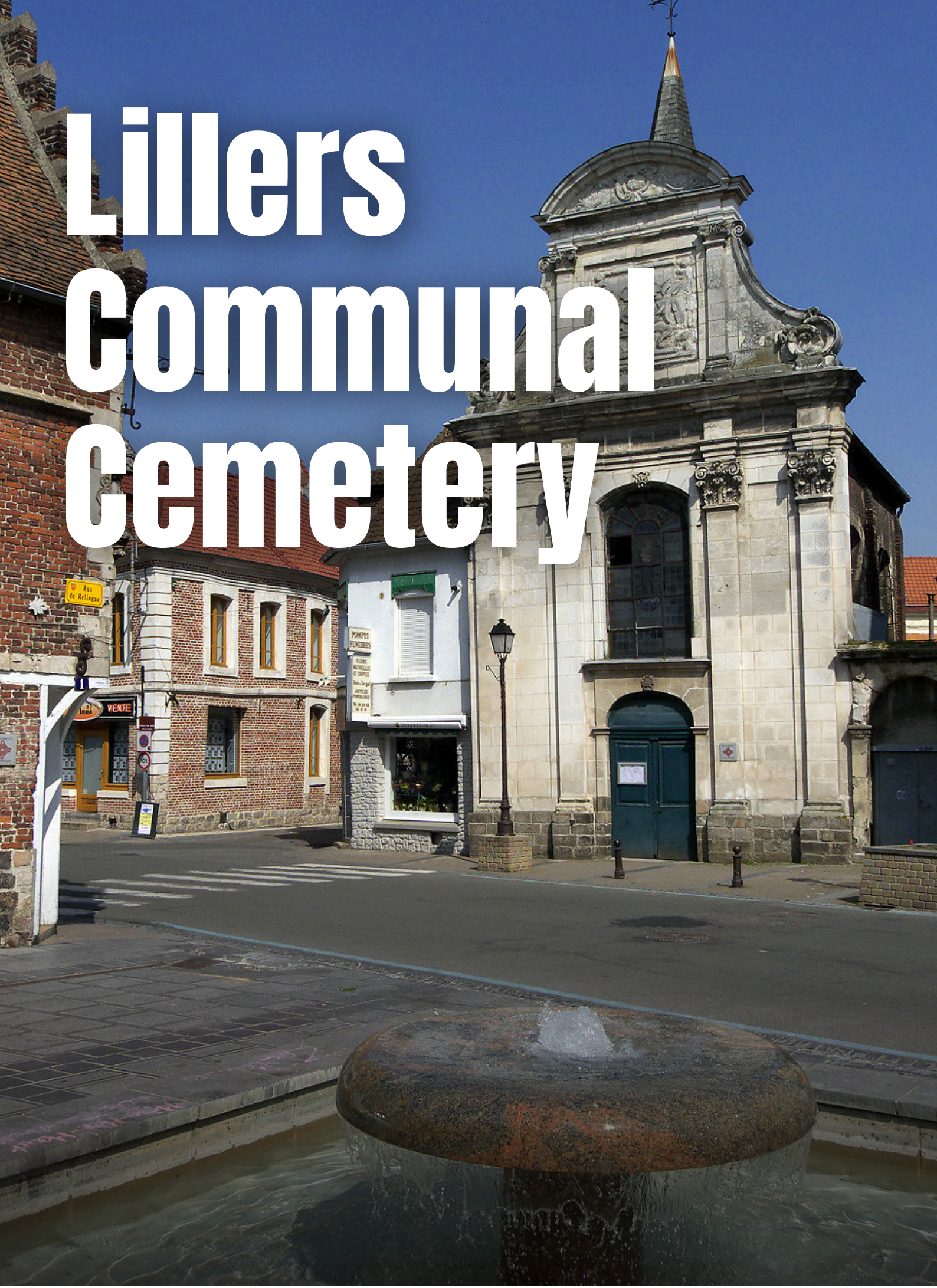
Born on *August 14, 1886* in **Listowel**, **Canada**, Matilda Ethel Green grew up in a farming family in **Manitoba**, with several brothers and sisters. She received her initial education in **Canada** before **training as a nurse** at the **Medicine Hat General Hospital in Alberta**.

In *April 1917*, she joined the **Canadian Army Medical Corps** as a **Nursing Sister** in **Calgary**. She attained the rank of **lieutenant**, like other Canadian military nurses. After leaving for **England** in *May 1917*, she was assigned to **Canadian General Hospital No. 16** in **Orpington**.

She was then sent to **France** in *1918* and worked at **Canadian General Hospital No. 7 in Étaples**. There she cared for many wounded soldiers in a context of **high medical activity**, where nurses played an essential role with the sick and wounded.

Matilda Ethel Green contracted **lobar pneumonia** in *October 1918* and was admitted to **General Hospital No. 24 in Étaples**. She died there on *October 9, 1918*, at the **age of 32**. She is buried in the **Étaples Military Cemetery** and is commemorated in the **Canadian Book of Remembrance**.

Lillers Communal Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Lillers**, inland in the Pas-de-Calais region, this communal cemetery includes a **military section** used during the First World War. The town, situated behind the front lines, hosted **military units** as well as **medical facilities**.

The cemetery is characterized by a **simple** and **regular** layout, with uniform headstones arranged in a quiet, wooded area. Today, it serves as a **discreet yet important** place for reflection.

The military section of the cemetery is integrated into the **municipal cemetery**, with headstones lined up in an orderly fashion in a separate but understated space.

Today, this site serves as a reminder of the **role of small towns** behind the front lines in **welcoming** and **caring for wounded soldiers**.

Ellen Andrews (1886-1918)

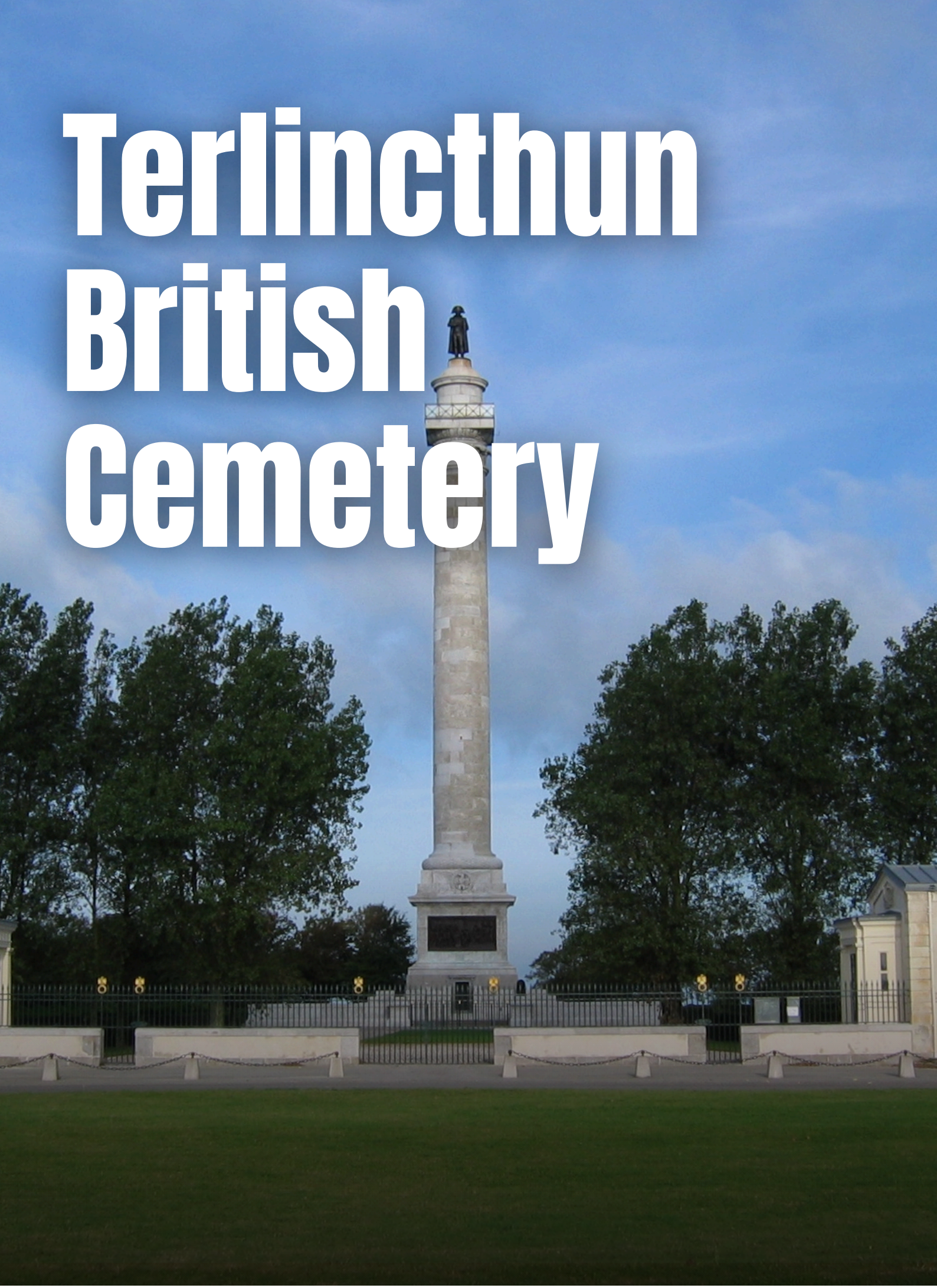
Born on *January 1, 1886* in **Gedney Dyke**, **Lincolnshire**, Ellen Andrews was the daughter of Frederick Andrews and Hannah Andrews. Having become fatherless at a very young age, she grew up with her mother and quickly gravitated towards the **medical field** by working **for a doctor**.

A **nurse** trained in **Leicester**, she joined the **Territorial Force Nursing Service** during the First World War. She initially served in **England**, where she was recognized for her **skills** and promoted to the rank of **Sister**. In *1917*, she went to **France** and was assigned **near the front**, notably to **Lillers**, at a **Casualty Clearing Station**, where she cared for seriously injured soldiers injured in **difficult conditions**.

On *March 21, 1918*, during a German **bombardment** at the start of the **spring offensive**, Ellen Andrews was killed at the **age of 32** while she was near the Lillers train station. A **major explosion**, caused by a struck munitions train, resulted in her instant death.

She is now buried in the **Lillers communal cemetery**, where many victims of the conflict rest. Her story testifies to the commitment and **courage** of military nurses, whose role was essential in caring for the wounded during the war.

Terlincthun British Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Wimille**, near **Boulogne-sur-Mer**, the Terlincthun cemetery was situated behind the front lines during the First World War. The area housed several **British military hospitals**.

It was created during the First World War to accommodate **soldiers who died** in the region's **military hospitals**.
It mainly contains the graves of **Commonwealth** soldiers who died between **1918** and the **following years**, in connection with the concentration of local medical facilities.

The site, meticulously maintained, offers a harmonious layout with rows of white stelae in an open landscaped setting. It remains today a **major memorial site in the Boulogne area**.

Margaret Young (1893-1915)

Born on *March 28, 1893*, in **Belfast**, **Ireland**, Margaret Cameron Young grew up in a Protestant family. She was raised by her parents in a neighborhood of the city where she spent her entire youth. The death of her father in *1915* marked a turning point in her life, shortly before her enlistment in the war effort.

In *1915*, in the midst of the First World War, she joined the **Voluntary Aid Detachment** (**VAD**), a volunteer organization supporting military medical services. She was quickly sent to **France** and assigned to the **general hospital in Le Havre**, where she assisted **nurses** and **doctors** in caring for wounded soldiers.

During her service, she demonstrated **great dedication** and received several **awards**, including **two efficiency bands** recognizing her **commitment**. She also participated in the daily operations of the hospital, contributing to **patient care**, **service organization**, and **patient support**.

Margaret Cameron Young died on *July 30, 1918*, at the **age of 25**, from an **illness** contracted while on duty. She is buried in the **British cemetery at Wimille, France**. Her story exemplifies the **commitment** and **sacrifice** of female volunteers caring for the wounded during the war.

Edith Ingram (1887-1918)

Born on *December 31, 1887*, in **Braunton**, **England**, Edith Annie Ingram grew up in a modest family. The daughter of a schoolteacher, she experienced a youth marked by family difficulties and several moves. Before the war, she likely worked as a **governess**, notably in **Brighton**.

In *1915*, in the midst of the First World War, she **volunteered** with the **Voluntary Aid Detachment**. She initially worked in a military hospital in **Brighton**, then was sent to **France** in *1917*, where she was assigned to the military **hospital in Wimereux, near Boulogne-sur-Mer**.

For over a year, she cared for wounded soldiers and distinguished herself by her **dedication** and **commitment**, receiving awards for the quality of her service. She worked in an environment close to the front lines, exposed to the **dangers of bombing**.

On the night of *August 13-14, 1918*, during an **air raid** on Boulogne, a bomb struck the hospital. Edith Annie Ingram was killed at the **age of 30**. She is buried in the **British cemetery in Wimille**, **France**. Her story is a testament to the **courage** and **sacrifice** of volunteer nurses during the war.

Evelyn Verral McKay (1892-1918)

Born on *November 24, 1892* in **Galt**, **Ontario** (**Canada**), Evelyn Verrall McKay grew up in a large family. She **trained as a nurse** in **Toronto**, where she acquired the necessary skills to practice in the **medical field** before the war.

In *1916*, in the midst of the First World War, she enlisted as a **military nurse** in the **Canadian Army Medical Corps**. After further training in **Canada**, she was sent to **Europe** and joined a **Canadian military hospital** located in **northern France**.

She treated numerous wounded or sick soldiers in difficult conditions, actively participating in the operation of **military medical services**. Her **commitment** and **dedication** were recognized by the **awarding of commemorative medals**.

In *October 1918*, she became seriously ill and was hospitalized in **Boulogne-sur-Mer**, where she died on *November 4, 1918*, at the **age of 25**, from **bronchopneumonia**. She is buried in the **British Cemetery at Wimille**, **France**. Her story illustrates the **essential role** and **sacrifice** of Canadian nurses during the war.

Mary Ann Spittle (1892-1919)

Born *around 1892* in **England**, Mary Ann Spittle grew up in **London** in a modest family. The eldest child, she was raised with her sister in the **South Hampstead** area. Little information survives about her early life, but she lived with her family until the start of the war.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**, an organization that allowed women to support the British Army. She worked there as an **administrative employee**, participating in the **management** and **organization** of military services.

Through her **office work**, she contributes to the **smooth running** of the army by freeing up soldiers for the front. Like many women involved in these **auxiliary services**, her role is essential to maintaining the war effort, even far from the fighting.

She died on *February 12, 1919*, at the **age of 26**, from influenza and **bronchopneumonia**. She is buried in the **British cemetery in Wimille**, **France**. Her story is a reminder of the importance and sacrifice of women who served in support roles during the war.

Elsie Parnell (1895-1919)

Born in *1895* in **Plumstead**, **London**, Elsie Parnell grew up in a modest and stable family. Daughter of Arthur William and Charlotte Anne Parnell, she received an education at **Woolwich Polytechnic Secondary School**, which prepared her for **administrative roles**.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**. Like many women in this organization, she participated in essential tasks such as **office work** and **logistical support**, thus contributing to the smooth running of the army.

Her commitment is part of a **collective effort** where women replace men in **non-combat roles**, allowing more soldiers to be sent to the front. Although far from the fighting, these missions remain **essential** to the war effort.

Elsie Parnell died on *March 6, 1919*, at the **age of 23**, from **bronchopneumonia**. She is buried in the **British cemetery in Wimille**, **France**. Her story highlights the **essential** and **often overlooked** role of women who served in auxiliary services during the war.

Annie Hall (1889-1919)

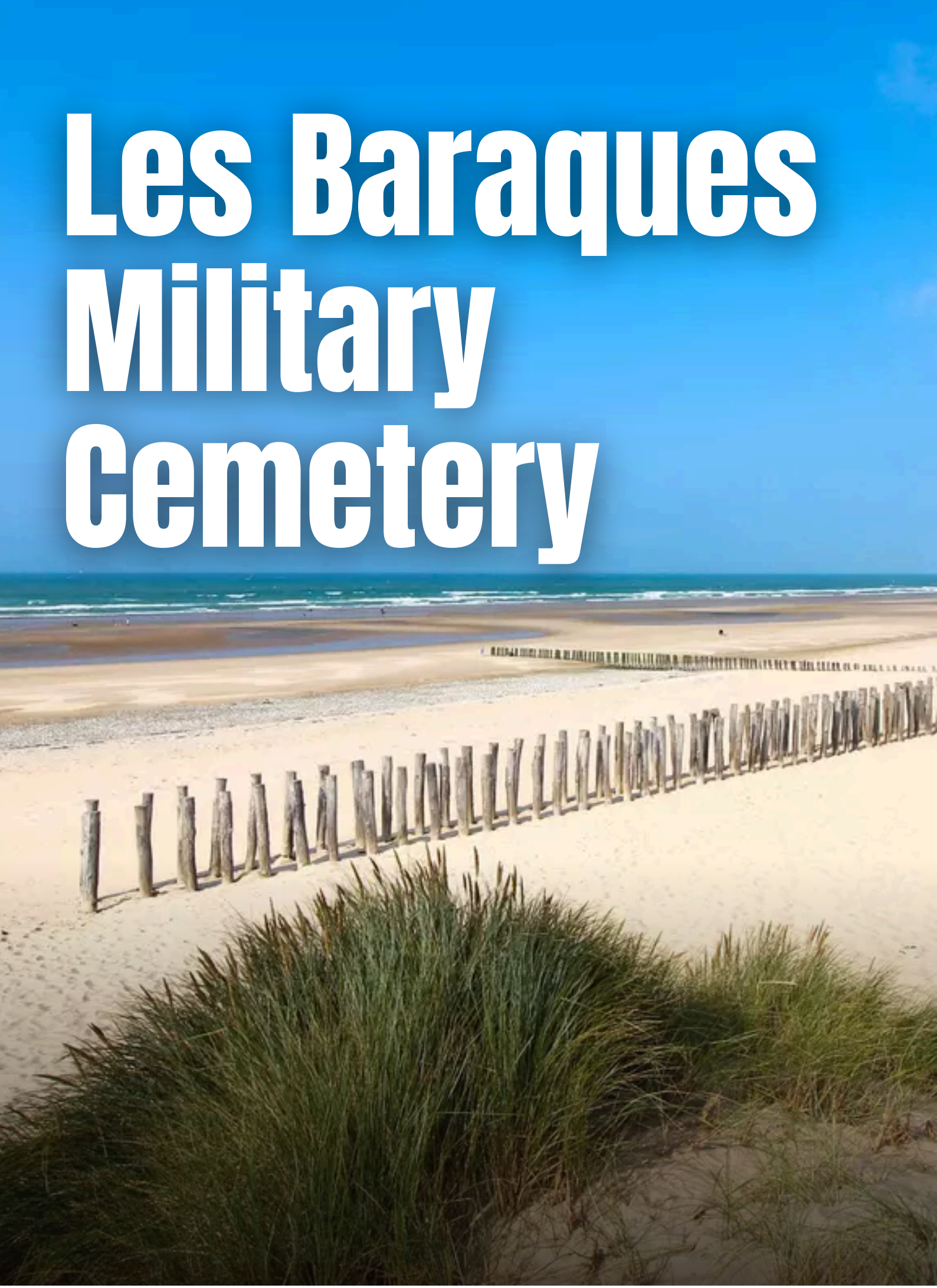
Born around *1889* in **Reedham**, **Norfolk**, **England**, Annie Hall, also known as Susannah, grew up in a modest family. The daughter of James and Annie Hall, she came from a typical rural background of the early 20th century.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**. She worked there as a **cook**, participating in the **preparation of meals** and the **logistical support** of the soldiers, an essential role in the smooth running of the army.

Like many women involved in these auxiliary services, she contributed to the war effort by allowing soldiers to concentrate on the front lines. Her work, although **non-combatant**, remained **essential** in the context of the conflict.

Annie Hall died on *March 23, 1919*, at the **age of 30**, a victim of **influenza**. She is buried in the **British cemetery in Wimille**, **France**. Her story is a reminder of the important role of women in **support services** and the lasting consequences of war, even after the fighting ended.

Les Baraques Military Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Sangatte**, near **Calais**, this military cemetery is situated in an area occupied by **British camps** and **hospitals** during the First World War.
The coastal area serves as a **strategic transit point to England**.

Many soldiers are buried there after being wounded on the front or dying in **nearby hospitals**, mainly from **Commonwealth forces**.

It still testifies to the **strategic importance** of this sector during the war.
Today, it serves as a place of remembrance, recalling the **strategic and medical importance of the Calais region during the conflict**.

Cora Cornish Ball (1896-1918)

Born in *September 1896* in **Truro**, **Cornwall** (**England**), Cora Cornish Ball grew up in a large family. The daughter of Mark Ball and Elizabeth Jane Dunstan Ball, she spent her childhood in and around Truro. She continued her schooling until **about the age of 14**, which later enabled her to obtain a **skilled position** in the army.

In *1917*, in the midst of the First World War, she joined the **Women's Army Auxiliary Corps**. She then went to **France**, near **Calais**, where she carried out **administrative** and **logistical tasks** essential to the functioning of the British army.

Thanks to her **dedication**, she was promoted to the rank of **Forewoman**, a position of responsibility equivalent to that of a **non-commissioned officer**. She continued her service after the corps was renamed the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**, and received **medals** for her role in the war effort.

Cora Cornish Ball died on *November 24, 1918*, at the **age of 22**, shortly after the end of the war, likely a victim of **influenza**. She is buried in the **military cemetery at Les Baraques**, **France**. Her story illustrates the essential and often overlooked role of women in supporting the armed forces during the war.

Silance Ethel Davis (1893-1919)

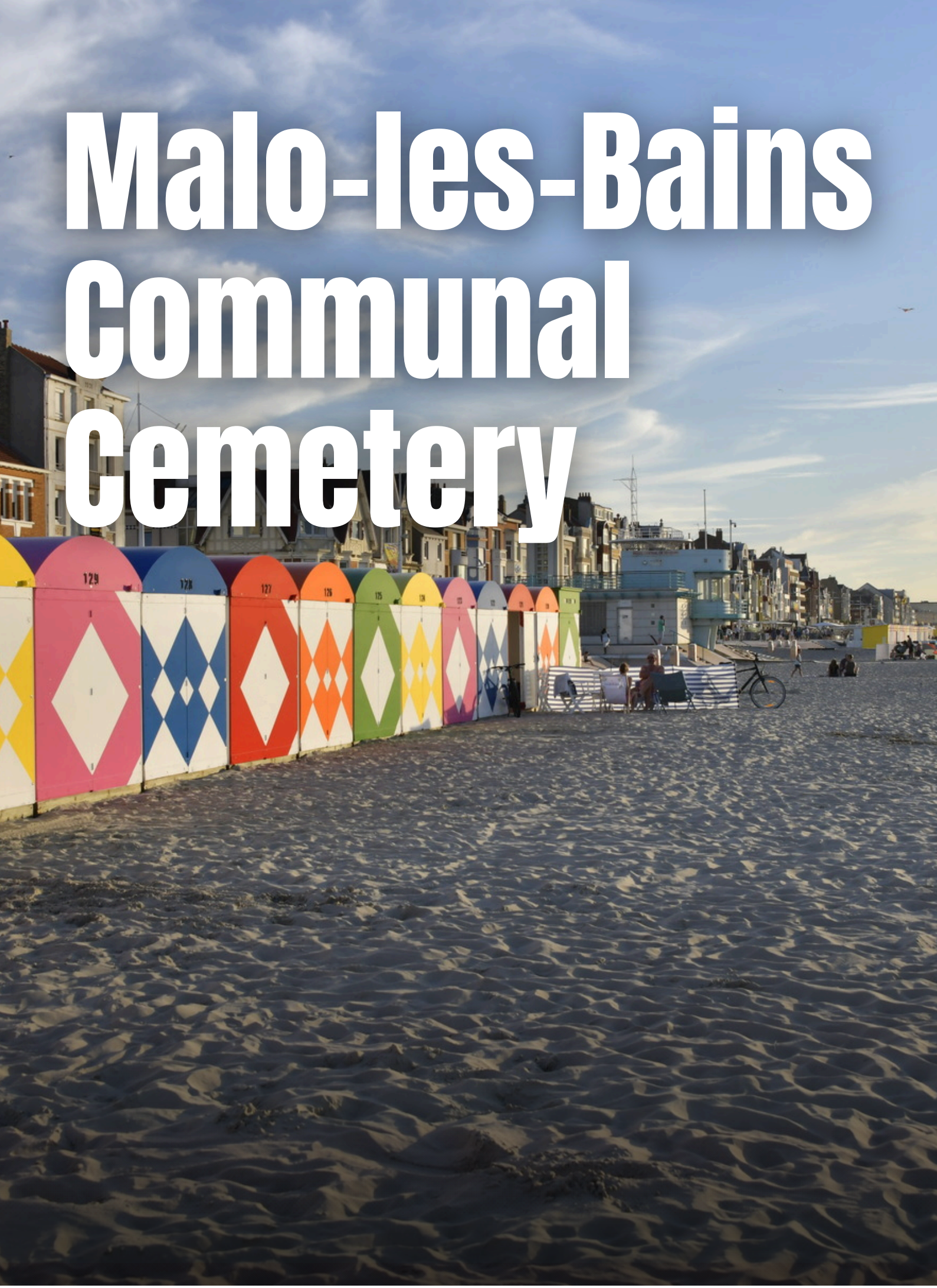
Born in *1893* in **Nottingham**, **England**, Silance Ethel Davis grew up in a working-class family. The daughter of William and Martha Annie Davis, she worked before the war as an **assistant in a textile shop**, where she gained experience in the **clothing industry**.

During the First World War, she joined the **Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps**. Like many women in this organization, she performed essential **support tasks** such as **administrative work**, **logistics**, and **assisting military services**.

She was also involved in **care** and **support services**, contributing to the war effort **behind the front lines**. Her role illustrates the importance of women in the **daily functioning** of the British Army during the conflict.

Ethel Davis died on *September 25, 1919*, at the **age of 25**, shortly after the end of the war. She is buried in the **military cemetery at Les Baraques** in **Sangatte**, **France**. Her story testifies to the **discreet but essential involvement** of women in the war and their lasting contribution to the military effort.

Malo-les-Bains Communal Cemetery



A place of remembrance

Located in **Malo-les-Bains**, a district of **Dunkirk**, this municipal cemetery includes a **military section linked to both World Wars**. The area bears the strong marks of **military operations**, particularly during the First World War.

Soldiers are buried there after succumbing to their **wounds** or **in combat**, particularly during **operations in the Dunkirk area**.

The site contains the graves of soldiers who died in **military hospitals in Dunkirk** or **during operations related to the defense of the coastline**.

The cemetery is distinguished by its orderly and peaceful setting, with headstones aligned against an urban and maritime backdrop. Today, it stands as an **important memorial to the Great War in the North**.

Katharine Kinnear (1885-1917)

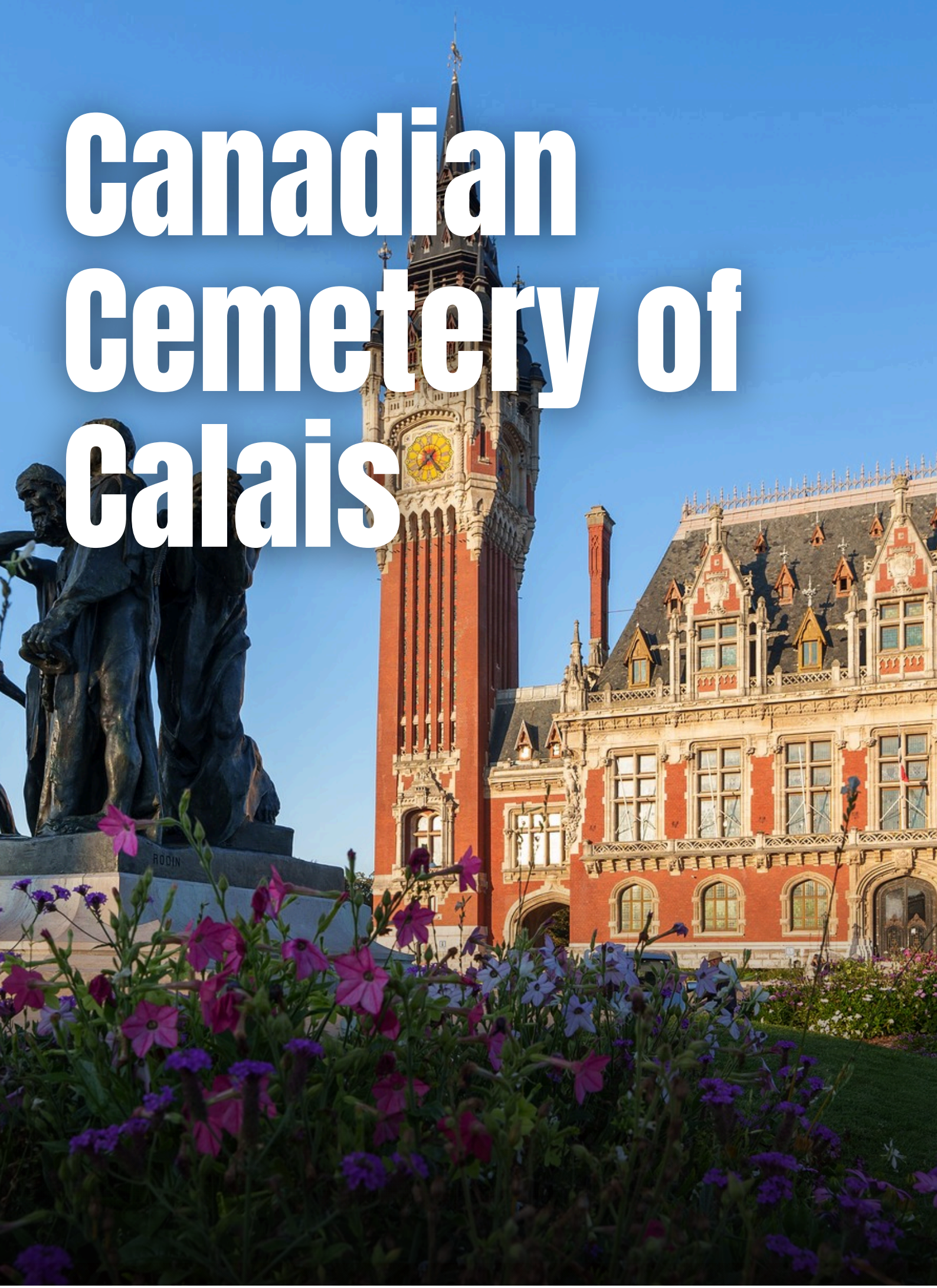
Born around *1885* in **Yorkshire**, **England**, Katharine Ferrars Kinnear grew up in a religious family. The daughter of a pastor, she was raised in a stable environment, but little information remains about her youth and education.

During the First World War, she volunteered as a nurse with the **Voluntary Aid Detachment**. Like many female volunteers, she helped **care for wounded soldiers** in military hospitals, supporting the medical staff.

Her **commitment** was **recognized** by the **French authorities**, who awarded her a **distinction** for her service. She thus became one of the many civilian nurses who contributed to the war effort under difficult conditions.

Katharine Ferrars Kinnear died on *September 3, 1917*, probably from an illness contracted while on duty, at the **age of approximately 29**. She is buried in **Malo-les-Bains**, **France**. Her story illustrates the risks faced by nurses and their essential role during the war.

Canadian Cemetery of Calais



A place of remembrance

Located near the city **center of Calais**, the military cemetery is part of the **network of medical** and **logistical** sites established during the First World War. The city played a **strategic role** as a **port** and **rear base for the Allied forces**.

It is located behind the front lines, in an area used for **cantonment** and **logistical support**. Many soldiers, **mainly from the Commonwealth**, are buried there after being treated in **military hospitals** in the area or **after being evacuated from the front**.

Today, he **pays tribute to the commitment of Canadian troops** and **recalls their important role in the operations conducted in northern France**.

Margaret Campbell (1917-1944)

Born in *1917* on the island of **Berneray**, **Scotland**, Margaret Campbell grew up in an isolated community in the Outer Hebrides. The daughter of Malcolm Campbell, she spent her childhood in a rural and insular environment, typical of northern Scotland.

During World War II, she joined the **Women's Auxiliary Air Force** (**WAAF**), the female branch of the **Royal Air Force**. There, she served as a **medic on board military aircraft**, participating in missions to transport and care for the wounded, which earned her the nickname "**Flying Nightingale**".

She was then assigned to the **437th Transport Squadron of the Canadian Air Force**, where she accompanied **logistical missions** aboard Dakota aircraft. These flights were **essential** for **transporting equipment** and sometimes **medical personnel** to **Europe**.

On *October 24, 1944*, during a return flight after a successful mission, her plane crashed near **Dunkirk**. Margaret Campbell died at the **age of 27**. She is buried in the **Canadian cemetery in Calais**. Her story exemplifies the **courage** of women involved in **medical air missions** during the war.

Our channel

We want to make historical information accessible to everyone, so you can find audio versions of all the stories and testimonies in this booklet online on our YouTube channel **Mémoire au féminin** or by **scanning the QR code**.

You can also find podcasts on various topics such as history, heritage and women.

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Thanks

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This project is first and foremost a **tribute to these women** whose **commitment**, **courage** and **dedication deserve to be known and passed on to future generations**.

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TESTIMONIES AND STORIES OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY WOMEN WHO DISAPPEARED DURING THE TWO WORLD WARS ON THE NORTHERN FRENCH COAST.

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